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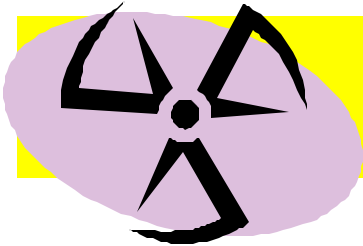
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## High Level Waste Transportation

At their annual meeting in Chicago the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners passed a resolution calling on the federal government to assist areas to be impacted by the movement of nuclear waste. The Commission called on financial and other assistance to be provided to the county where the nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain is located. The resolution also called for the Department of Energy to coordinate with all state, tribal and local governments in planning nuclear waste transportation modes, routes

and schedules along potential corridors between existing storage locations and Yucca mountain. Because the Department of Energy does not have a disposal facility available yet for the waste, Maine Yankee must store it on-site. Maine Yankee estimates the Department of Energy will not remove all used fuel from the plant site until 2023 or beyond. The Department of Energy milestone set the opening of Yucca Mountain in 2010.



Department of Human Services  
MAINE RADIATION  
CONTROL PROGRAM

### Radiation Newsletter

## ADVISORY COMMISSION ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE & DECOMMISSIONING NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 3 2002

## Nuclear Emergency Support Teams

The Nuclear Emergency Support Team (NEST) is a group of scientists and technicians that are part of a little-known agency inside the US Department of Energy. The team is supported by helicopters forming the main assets of the program. The program is small with a \$77 million budget. Its scientists, who number about 750, are all volunteers from the Energy Department's weapons labs, working on a rotating call. Their mission is to protect the countless bridges, tunnels, ports, skyscrapers, and monuments in American cities from a terrorist's nuclear strike. The task is almost unimaginable in this era of permanent alert.

It is a task complicated by the bureaucratic thicket that has encircled the agency throughout its 28-year history. Rooted in the Energy Department, NEST assists the FBI and reports to the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Pentagon. President Bush's reorganization would place it in the new Department of Homeland Security. Since Sept. 11, NEST has been doing much more. Besides helicopter patrols, teams have been driving around urban areas in vans known as "Hot Spot Mobile Labs," armed with instruments that detect alpha, beta,

gamma, and neutron radiation. Other teams are equipped with backpacks that hold smaller detectors. Last October, when intelligence agencies warned that a "dirty bomb" might be placed in lower Manhattan, NEST technicians stood with FBI agents and police, waving hand-held hazardous-material detectors across the thousands of trucks that were stopped and searched. NEST was started in 1974 after an extortionist threatened to explode a nuclear bomb in Boston if he didn't receive \$200,000. The threat turned out to be a hoax. Federal officials were horrified that they had no way of responding had it been real. NEST scientists have been deployed on occasional real-life patrols - in Washington, D.C., during the Bicentennial and in Atlanta and Salt Lake City during the Olympics. However, not until recently have they conducted so many missions on such a far-flung, prolonged basis. Since September, NEST's budget for radiation-detectors has doubled, and the nation's weapons labs - Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and Sandia - are developing and rapidly deploying smaller and more refined models.

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Special points of interest:	
• Low Level Radioactive Waste and Materials in Maine	
• Decommissioning of Maine Yankee Atomic Power Plant	
• Radioactive Waste Management	
• High Level Radioactive Waste	
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Commission Members

- Sen. Sharon Treat, Chair
- Rep. Robert Daigle, Vice Chair
- Rep. Peter L. Rines
- Rep. William R. Savage
- Sen. Norman Ferguson Jr
- Sen. Tom Sawyer
- Robert Demkowicz, DEP
- Clough Toppan, PE, DHS
- Dr. Robert Marvinney, State Geologist
- Mike Meisner, Maine Yankee
- Ron Ouelette, Public
- Richard Carey, Public
- Stephen Jarrett, Public
- Jim Mitchell, Public
- W. Donald Hudson, PhD, Chewonki Foundation

National Research Council Committee on Low- Activity Waste

The Committee on Improving Practices for Regulating and Managing Low-Activity Radioactive Waste of the National Research Council had its first meeting on December 4 and 5. The Committee plans to meet eight times during its 20-month study of options for improving practices for regulating and managing low-activity radioactive waste in the United States. In the open portion of last week’s meeting, the Committee heard from the sponsors of the study, with regard to their concerns and expectations of the study. Some of the messages presented included:

- There is a patchwork of regulation, causing some wastes to be over-regulated and other wastes to escape regulation;
- There is conflict among the statutes (statutory “boxes” or categories), which perhaps merits study by

Congress;

- The Committee should take this opportunity to reframe the “boxes”;
- Not all NRC standards are based on risk;
- An integrated program is needed to protect the worker, the public, and the environment;
- The risk of human exposure to the worker from cleanup is often greater than the risk of not cleaning up;
- A universal modeling tool is needed for all cleanup assessments;
- Businesses want clear-cut, predictable and effective regulation;
- Consideration should be made on whether some subset of low activity waste can be handled differently, less stringently; and
- A universal model or methodology is needed for radiation risk assessment.

The Committee expressed an interest in hearing presentations and/or receiving information from compacts, states, and state organizations.

ENVIROCARE OF UTAH’S CLASS A, B and C WASTE PERMIT

Envirocare’s petition to receive and dispose of containerized Class A, B and C waste at it’s Clive, Utah site was affirmed by the Utah Radiation Control Board. The board affirmed on November 19, 2002 an earlier vote of 9 to 0 to approve their application. The board determined that Envirocare needed to revise its emergency response and contingency plans, but

allowed the company to make the changes at any point before it actually starts accepting Class B and C waste. Envirocare stopped its licensing process short of the needed governor and state legislative approval due to controversy with the Goshute Indians Spent Fuel Storage Facility. Envirocare could reactivate its petition for the approval after the next legislative session begins on January 20, 2003.

All meetings of the Advisory Commission are open to the public. The commission meets 4-6 times a year to discuss and review LLW and decommissioning issues. Meeting dates can be found at our website or call Tom Hillman at 207-287-8401 for the next meeting time or to be placed on the meeting notification list.

Activists Seek Hearing on MY Nuke Waste Security

Friends of the Coast- Opposing Nuclear Pollution filed a Petition for a Hearing with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on December 2 seeking to have a judicial panel review security arrangements for 600 tons of high level nuclear waste now stored at the Maine Yankee Atomic Power Station site in Wiscasset. The petition responds to an NRC Order for Interim Safeguards and Security Compensatory Measures issued on October 16<sup>th</sup> for the Maine Yankee Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation. The Order comes thirteen months after the events of September 11, 2001. The Friends of the Coast Petition

says that security and safeguards at Maine Yankee are not adequate to protect the public health and safety in the event of a terrorist attack and the NRC Order merely confirms a dangerous and untenable situation. The Friends of the Coast Petition follows another Petition on the Order filed by the State's Office of Attorney General on November 15. While the State's Petition focused on the costs of providing security backup and the long-term schedule for removing the nuclear fuel, and contained a disclaimer asserting that the fuel is safely stored, Friends of the Coast goes after what the group perceives as security weaknesses.

According to the Friends of the Coast Petition, the sixty outdoor concrete and steel casks in which Maine Yankee nuclear fuel will be stored are not proof against a variety of munitions, explosives, and incendiaries available through terrorist networks and even on the open market. Although NRC claims that there would be no significant off site effects should Maine Yankee "lose control of the site to terrorists," Friends of the Coast estimates that if just one percent of the radioactive cesium contained in one of the casks were to be released to the wind, large portions of Westport, Wiscasset, and/or Woolwich might have to be evacuated and abandoned for 150 or more years.

LLW Disposal at Barnwell

The South Carolina budget and Control Board recently sent out letters informing users of the Barnwell facility that stating in July 2004 it may be hard to schedule disposal. The Board suggested to users that a multi-year commitments would be needed to guarantee disposal space. At present, the Board has set up commitments with utilities representing 24 nuclear power plant units and several large generators. The letter states that Barnwell

believes it is on track this year to receive 70,000 cubic feet of waste, which is the statutory limit. The Board feels that demand in 2003 for disposal will approximate supply and that Barnwell will be able to continue accepting waste on a first-come, first-serve basis until the 2004 Fiscal year starts in July of 2003. The letter includes the following statement of future capacity.

“Given the volume caps in state law, and communication al-

ready in place and in the latter stages of discussion, we estimate that we have the volumes of un-committed capacity below. From these available volumes we would like to set aside some small amount for acceptance of sealed sources in situations where other alternatives for disposition are not available.

FY03/04	5,800 cf
FY04/05	29,500 cf
FY05/06	26,800 cf
FY06/07	23,800 cf
FY07/08	17,800 cf